

SOCIAL SCIENCES

SEPTEMBER
1956

PUBLIC RELATIONS JOURNAL

A JOURNAL OF OPINION IN THE
FIELD OF PUBLIC RELATIONS PRACTICE

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Failure to learn the business
can exclude public relations
from the policy-making level
by Robert E. Curtin, Jr.

TREMORS NORTH OF THE BORDER

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FLETCHER KNEBEL

Washington Correspondent, Cowles Publications

on

Public Relations at the White House

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A JOURNAL OF OPINION IN THE FIELD OF PUBLIC RELATIONS PRACTICE

PUBLIC RELATIONS JOURNAL

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ON THE COVER: One of the top Washington correspondents, Fletcher Knebel, has been recording the "Potomac Fever" (title of his searching and humorous syndicated column) for the past 18 years. A Phi Beta Kappa graduate of Miami University, Oxford, Ohio, he has been a newspaperman for 22 years. After brief hitches with the Chattanooga News and Toledo News Bee, he joined the Cleveland Plain Dealer in 1937 and a year later became one of its Washington staffmen. He joined the Washington staff of the Cowles Publications (Look Magazine, Minneapolis Star and Tribune, Des Moines Register and Tribune) in 1950, starting his now famous column a year later. He is a member of the National Press Club and the Gridiron Club. Currently he is Chairman of the Music Committee of the Gridiron Club, and is active in the production and acting of its annual dinner skits.



Editorial

PREPARATION FOR PUBLIC RELATIONS

The articles by Mr. Nelson and Mr. Curtin in this issue of the JOURNAL merit, we think, the careful attention of those people who are concerned with the preparation of young men and women for the public relations field. Public relations has become in recent years one of those things like journalism, TV, and the theater—occupations for which there seem to be at least 10 applicants for every job that exists. Yet, the TV is avidly in search of people who can put on a show that will get a high Nielsen rating. The theater will pay almost anything to an actor or actress who can draw 'em in at the box office. And newspaper editors complain vigorously that they can't get enough good men. They, too, would pay handsomely for another Alva Johnston. And we might add that corporations, too, pay pretty handsomely for public relations people in whose judgment they can put confidence.

But let us be quite clear about this; it is the judgment for which they pay—not the ability to turn out a passably competent press release. It is the opinion of the editors of the JOURNAL that maybe there has been a little too much emphasis in some of the public relations schools and courses on how to write a press release, for example, and too little on building the background to develop judgment. And maybe there has also been too much emphasis on techniques that tend to set a public relations man apart from his colleagues in other phases of business and too little emphasis on the problem pointed up by Mr. Curtin in the broad understanding of the problems of the employer or client. And another valid observation, we believe, is that some of the people who have had a few courses in public relations in college seem to think that qualifies them to step right into important jobs.

In the first place, people of scant maturity can't be sent by anybody to advise important people on important problems because if they are, not much attention is going to be paid to the advice. And since the advisory function is the key one in any public relations operation, it follows that people at age 22-23 cannot expect to step into responsibilities involving advice and judgment. In order to take over those kinds of jobs it seems to us vital that young men and women should get, in their 20s and the lower half of their 30s, the kind of experience that will qualify them most. We think it is an open question whether that experience is best obtained in a public relations department doing routine matters or whether it can best be obtained elsewhere.

There is much to be said for the newspaper, for example. The reason so many former newspapermen are in public relations is not, as most people assume, that in newspaper work they learned how to write; the reason is that in newspaper work every time they called a man up or went to see anyone and asked him for information about any matter, the person called had a public relations problem on his hands. As newspaper reporters they saw some of these people handle the problems expertly; they saw others bungle them expertly; and they saw all gradations in between.

Given a smart young fellow to begin with, we think he gets infinitely more training of the kind that develops judgment through five or ten years as a newspaper reporter seeing other people handle public relations problems than he gets by doing routine work in a public relations office. Furthermore, there is the very practical thing that a newspaperman also makes many contacts which are very likely to lead into getting a good public relations job if that's his objective. In hiring, people are apt to select those with whose work they are familiar.

We think there is a good deal to justify the criticism that the public relations courses in the colleges emphasize too much how to write a press release and too little how to develop the background and experience and knowledge that lays the foundation on which to form good judgments.

It is always hard to generalize in this field, and much depends upon what the ultimate aim of the individual is. There is a big field in public relations for technicians in communication, and if the young man is content to be merely a technician in communication, that is one thing, but if his aim is higher and he would like to have his advice sought at policy levels, then he faces a different problem.

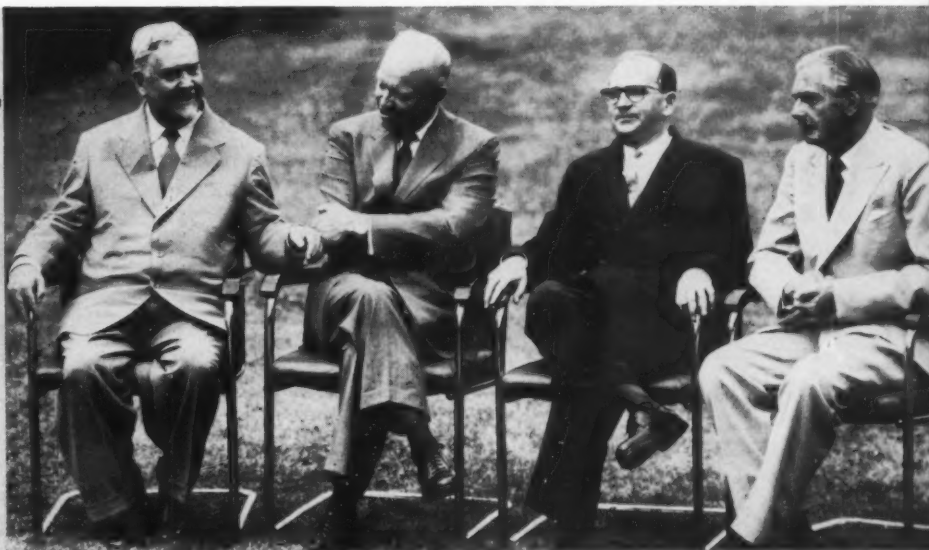
For the man whose ambition is the first type of public relations work, the sooner he gets into it, the better off he'll be and the more experience he'll accumulate. But for those whose ambition points to higher levels, it is different. If we were advising a young man of that kind how best to prepare himself for public relations, we'd tell him to go through the best liberal arts college he could get into, specializing in the field of history, English literature, and the social sciences—and then take a graduate course in public relations. We emphasize graduate course. And then go get himself a job on a newspaper. And we don't mean writing sports, either. We think the average fellow who follows this course in 1956 will get farther in public relations by 1970 than the fellow who thinks he's prepared as soon as he graduates from college.

Public Relations at the White House

DO LITTLE OR TOO MUCH?

The President's press, says this experienced observer, is excellent but his aides draw criticism on two sides: for too much information and sometimes not enough

by FLETCHER KNEBEL
Washington Correspondent
Cowles Publications



THEY LIKE IKE: Soviet Premier Bulganin, President Eisenhower, French Premier Faure and British Prime Minister Eden gathered in historic news picture at a recent parley. Ike's admirers include such diverse elements as Nikita Khrushchev, boss of all Russians, and Caesar Petrillo, boss of all musicians.

In the closing days of the 1952 campaign, Candidate Dwight Eisenhower and Gov. Earl Warren of California made a joint TV appearance in Chicago for West Coast consumption only. A short rehearsal preceded the 15-minute show.

At the conclusion of the dry run, Ike good-naturedly gave Warren a few tips. Warren, observed Ike, should move around a bit more and he ought to change the wording of one political plug.

"And you shouldn't place yourself over there," said Ike, pointing to one spot, "because in order to talk to you there, I'll have to turn my back on the camera."

The actual telecast went through without a hitch. Warren paid strict attention to Gen. Eisenhower's admonitions. The West Coast audience saw a famous Republican pair in peak form, smiling, gracious and sincere.

Several things impressed those who saw the rehearsal. First, the supposedly political novice, Eisenhower, gave helpful orders to Warren, a veteran political barnstormer. Second, Ike exhibited an instinctive flair for the newest vehicle for political persuasion. Third, no Robert Montgomery or other PR technician was in the studio.

Four years later, in weighing the Eisenhower administration's public relations record, it is well to keep this little studio scene in mind. Ike's popularity with the country is based about as much on keen public relations advice as was the popularity of George Washington or Andrew Jackson.

In fact, anybody who couldn't sell Eisenhower to America, let alone the world, ought to have his head examined.

Ike, it appears, is a hero to such dissimilar souls as Jimmy Petrillo, boss of the musicians union; Nikita Khrushchev, boss of all the Russians, and your own wife, boss of your home and wallet.

The Democrats and many Washington correspondents would have you believe otherwise. According to their story, Ike is a politically naive, likable and somewhat lazy gentleman who maintains his hold on the affections of the people through the adroit shuffling of stage scenery by such slickers as White House Press Secretary James C. Hagerty, TV Producer Robert Montgomery and various anonymous slogan craftsmen of Madison Avenue.

It's too bad for the public relations profession that this happens to be untrue, for such an accomplishment would rank with the build-up of Jane Russell as an actress as one of the publicity marvels of the age.

Whatever the admitted talents of Hagerty, Montgomery and M. Avenue, it's a cinch that Republican Chairman Leonard Hall would be happy to give every public relations man in America to the Democrats—and pay the salary of a sizable passel of them—in return for an iron-clad assurance that Mr. Eisenhower could get through the campaign without further damage to his plumbing and heating system.

If you think this assessment is a bit strong, cast your mind back to the administration of Herbert Hoover when the late Charley Michelson, then public relations poo-bah for the Democrats, was given credit for putting the blocks to Mr. Hoover in very canny fashion.

Continued on Following Page

"No one doubts Ike's popularity — with or

public relations is a key factor in generating goose-pimples for a candidate among the electorate, how did the last half of the Eisenhower-Nixon combination get left in the shadow of the halo? Herculean efforts in publicity have been put forth in Vice President Richard M. Nixon's behalf, but thus far there is no indication that many voters would don sackcloth and ashes if Nixon decided to chuck it all in favor of truck gardening.

So in surveying the deeds, foul or fair, of the Eisenhower public relations menage, we can make far better time by leaving most of President Eisenhower out of it. The phrase "most of President Eisenhower" is used advisedly because the heart and alimentary canal of the president are something else again. That's "Inside Ike" and Jim Hagerty's abundance of X-rays, chart talks and gizzard wizardry may have changed the face of political medicine for all time.

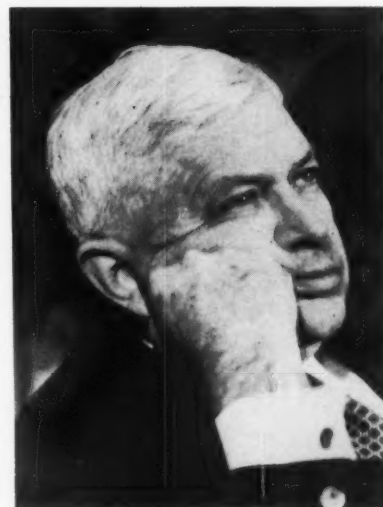
The Ike administration is in hot water with the press on two counts. 1) Concealing too much information. 2) Putting out too much information.

Of these twin sins, there is little doubt that the one which enrages the press the most is the second one. Nothing so upsets a newspaperman as a public relations man who puts out more information than the news gatherer is equipped to handle or who puts out information not immediately available to all hands.

When a newsman waxes indignant about the withholding of information, he means information withheld from him personally. In his secret heart, he would rather have a nugget of truth withheld forever from public view than have it profaned by dropping into the exclusive clutches of a competitor.

The first evidence of this trait under the current administration occurred in September, 1953, when Attorney General Herbert Brownell revealed to five Washington correspondents that Ike would name Earl Warren as Chief Justice of the United States. No sooner did this fact hit print than the 1,500-odd Washington newsmen of all media, who went unfavored with Brownell's confidence, filled the air with aggrieved yowls.

Brownell merely had sought to repay five old friends for courtesies extended in the past, surely a sentiment among the noblest of human motives. But abuse leaped at the Attorney General from all



*SECRETARY WILSON?
New dignity for secrets?*

quarters. The outbursts of fury at the National Press Club bar indicated plainly that most newspapermen would rather have no Chief Justice at all than have the news vault exclusively from competitive typewriters.

More recently Robert J. Donovan of the New York Herald-Tribune took a leave of absence to write a book on the "Inside Story" of the Eisenhower regime. Since the Herald-Tribune and the Ike team had shared the same political bed for many moons, White House aides made various memos and minutes available to a writer they were convinced would not take an unfriendly view of their endeavors at statecraft.

Here again the majority of Washington newsmen came down with a case of journalistic jaundice. Their combined ire even prodded Senator John L. McClellan, Arkansas Democrat, to get to the bottom of this insidious plot to give the public more information that it deserved.

It was ever thus. When Arthur Krock of the New York Times and John Hersey, writing for the New Yorker, gained exclusive interviews with President Harry Truman, the rest of the press sulked. All the news that's fit to print, the average newspaperman feels, is all the news that he gets. If he doesn't get it, it's tainted. Find a newspaperman who cheers aloud and glows with inward professional pride whenever a competitor breaks a story of rock 'n roll

WHITE HOUSE as focus of American attention and political tradition is hottest public relations seat in the entire nation.

In the light of history, it is obvious that unemployment among the citizenry was what fixed Mr. Hoover's wagon. He would have run second to Franklin D. Roosevelt (or almost anybody else) in 1932 if Charley Michelson had never seen a typewriter. The only counter to this argument is a contention that a depression can be prevented by public relations genius. If any reader can prove that contention, Editor Brayman no doubt will be willing to turn over an entire issue to him.

As for Alf Landon in 1936, \$50,000,000 worth of public relations talent couldn't have won the election for him. Unless, of course, the PR consultants spent their time stuffing ballot boxes and buying up poll-watchers in some 60,000 precincts at 50 bucks a head.

Getting down to current events, if

CAMPAIGN PUBLIC RELATIONS have changed since 1880's when vote was small and preference was open and no secret.



...without public relations counsel..."



VICE PRESIDENT NIXON
In the halo's shadow?

proportions and you'll find a man whose colleagues consider him an odd-ball of vast dimensions.

This suspicion of released news is not confined to the exclusive variety. In late spring, the State Department released the secret text of Khrushchev's famed anti-Stalin speech to Communist moguls. Correspondents were summoned to the State Department for a briefing.

Several reporters immediately began questioning "why" the State Department made the document public. Wouldn't such release tend to create world-wide sympathy for the new Red leaders? What did the U. S. stand to gain?

Implicit in the questions was the thought that the State Department would be fully justified in suppressing news of monumental character if it served the ends of U. S. foreign policy. Yet the same correspondents, and their editors, would thunder against the administration for withholding information on the same ground.

This gets around to the second sin of the Eisenhower public relations men, the sin of concealing information. There is no doubt that this has been practiced on a handsome scale. V. M. Newton, Jr., managing editor of the Tampa Morning Tribune and a crusader for full disclosure of public acts, says that he has "great personal doubts that we could find a single federal public servant, who has come altogether clean with the people in the matter of facts of govern-

ment, even though it is the people's business and the people pay him his salary."

A number of executive orders and letters, including one from President Eisenhower to Defense Secretary Charles E. Wilson during the army-McCarthy hearings, have given secrecy a new dignity in Washington.

For three years, Newton has been trying to get the government to release the names and amounts of pensions given former congressmen. The administration has yet to accede to his almost weekly requests. Presumably a Communist coup d'etat would promptly follow disclosure of how much congressmen get from the pension kitty.

The full-blown campaign to make the administration quit hiding unpleasant facts behind the cloak of national security has made some progress, thanks in large part to the efforts of J. Russell Wiggins, executive editor of the Washington Post & Times-Herald and sparkplug of the freedom of information committee of the American Society of Newspaper Editors.

A House investigating committee, headed by Rep. John E. Moss (Dem.) of California, has unearthed scores of cases where officials with a frivolous attitude toward the public's right to know have hidden facts that a Communist wouldn't bother to read.

But the press will never make headway against the evils of capricious secrecy until it quits objecting every time news about the government appears in a form deemed distasteful to certain publications.

A case in point was Hagerty's Denver press conference with the doctors attending Ike's heart seizure. Many newspapers deleted from the text of Dr. Paul Dudley White's remarks his reference to the president's satisfactory bowel movements. A spot check of a large group of metropolitan newspapers by Frank Eyerly, managing editor of the Des Moines Register & Tribune, showed that only three printed this item of medical intelligence.

Also the enormous volume of medical data which Hagerty made available to reporters in the wake of the president's heart attack and intestinal operation served only to awaken the suspicions of many reporters.

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P.R. — OR CIRCUMSTANCE?



HOOVER WAS HOODOOED from beginning, Mr. Knebel says, by economic forces beyond his control.* He shouldered blame for deepening slump.



LANDON WAS LANDSLIDED by the times. Author feels no public relations effort could have changed result which saw FDR sweep nation.



EISENHOWER WAS ELECTED because, says Mr. Knebel, anyone who couldn't sell that warm personality (left) to the electorate needs mental care.

*Shown riding to capital on March 4, 1933, with successor who had better luck.



DOCTOR examining patient seeks to know as much about individual's history, environment and outlook as he can before prescribing.



LAWYER trying a case on technical subject applies himself to client's business until he becomes an authority, often astonishes experts.



ARCHITECT who designs your home will study family living pattern, probe deeply into domestic needs before setting pencil on paper to draw the plans.

Personal Success in Public Relations Begins Only When We Can Avoid the Deadliest Pitfall

by ROBERT E. CURTIN, JR.

The bright, young public relations director, fresh from a brilliant career in journalism, was summoned to the chairman's office. Some of the board members were assembled there, wrestling with a knotty financing problem, and they wanted an opinion on its public relations aspects. The young director had indeed heard of the problem, but he had mentally filed it under the heading "Treasurer's Department."

Not wanting to appear dumb, however, he launched into an extemporaneous plan of action. The group listened in growing astonishment. When he had finished, there was deep silence, finally broken by the chairman's polite cough.

"Yes, that would work, I suppose, but have you considered what the plan would cost us?"

"No, I can't say that I have."

"Well, just as an estimate, I would say 10 million dollars."

Fortunately, the public relations director was a fast learner. Otherwise he

would have been a much older as well as wiser man before he was again thus summoned for advice.

This touching but true tale was related to me by the victim himself—now widely respected as one of the ablest men in the field—at a meeting of the Public Relations Society of America. It reflected a condition all too common a decade or so ago, and still too much with us today. When industry began turning to journalism for skill in helping to deal with its multiplying public relations problems, the talent enlisted often was able to contribute a valuable fresh point of view. But this happy result came about only when the recruits were wise enough and able enough to study and comprehend the environment of the business world. Many were not that able or wise, and they suffered the deadly penalty of not being taken seriously. Indeed, many were so misguided as to assume a superior and disdainful attitude toward the mechanics and methods of business and industry. These inhabitants of ivory towers perished even faster.

The danger of this no doubt will lessen as public relations practice matures. More young men today are beginning their careers directly in some branch of public relations work. If they are good, they will learn their environment—industrial or otherwise—as they grow. But the danger is still with us; it is still as deadly as ever, and one can still see the bodies of its victims strewn the field.

This danger represents the chief finding in a project which, prior to that PRSA meeting, I had been pursuing in a desultory way over nearly 20 years of industrial public relations work—an informal opinion research project seeking to answer this question: What are the leading causes of failure in public relations practice as determined by experts who have overcome them?

ROBERT E. CURTIN, JR., is an assistant editor of the *PUBLIC RELATIONS JOURNAL* and is executive assistant in the Public Relations Department of E. I. du Pont de Nemours and Company at the Wilmington, Del., headquarters of the company. During a 16-year period before joining the Du Pont Company he was successively a reporter, copy editor, and assistant city editor of the Wilmington *MORNING NEWS*. During the same period he was Delaware and Eastern Shore correspondent of *The New York TIMES* and reporter and drama critic of *VARIETY* at Wilmington during that city's heyday as a try-out town for new Broadway productions and a center of litigation for the movie industry. At the Du Pont Company, he was manager of the Information Division before being appointed to his present post in 1949. He is a graduate of the University of Delaware and is extremely vain about his fishing prowess. He is a member of the New York Anglers' Club.

Failure to learn the business we seek to advance is the major hazard in operating "at the policy level"

When I heard the pitiful story just related, the project jelled. I immediately became a systematic collector of experiences pertinent to this question, assembling a sort of chamber of horrors. There were many other gruesome findings, but that which is here reported was the most awe inspiring of all in its potential for disaster. It is distilled out of the sufferings of some now truly seasoned public relations operatives. Collation of sufferings is sound methodology in this type of research. No one oracle has been through enough fire to give all the answers; a consensus is needed. It seems that anybody can tell you how to succeed, but in this intangible occupation it takes a comparative study of high grade experience to find the sure methods of failure.

And the surest method of all, in the present state of our knowledge, is this:

Failure to learn the business—not failure to learn public relations technique, but failure to understand, in a mature and sophisticated way, the business of the client or employer, whether small merchant, large industrialist, welfare agency, or college.

Taking, for example, industrial public relations men—I am easiest in this, my familiar field—many youthful aspirants talk earnestly about the need for "having the ear of management" and functioning at the "policy-making level." But a surprisingly large number seem uninterested in taking the first steps thereto. They seem unwilling to learn how to think the thoughts and talk the language of management—even the first syllables.

A wild and unwarranted indictment? Just ask some of your younger associates what they understand to be the significance of accelerated depreciation, dividend restrictions in prior security indentures, current rate of turnover, deviation from standard inventory of semi-finished product, average return on

KNOWLEDGEABILITY TEST

For Industrial Public Relations Practitioners

Within a generous margin of error (say 10 to 20 per cent) can you give:

- | | Yes | No |
|--|-------|-------|
| 1. Latest reported Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) consumer price index and whether in the last 3 to 5 years it has been up, down, or steady? | | |
| 2. The same for BLS average hourly wages in U. S. manufacturing? | | |
| 3. The same for gross national product? | | |
| 4. The same for Dow-Jones industrial stock price average? | | |
| 5. The same for U. S. public debt and whether the federal budget for the most recent fiscal year showed a surplus or deficit? | | |
| 6. The same for effective federal tax rate paid by your firm (5-year period)? | | |
| 7. The same for BLS wholesale price index for all commodities compared with prices of your firm's major products? | | |
| 8. The same for average operative investment per employee in your firm? | | |
| 9. Range in recent years of your firm's return on investment (i.e., net operating income as per cent of average operating investment)? | | |
| 10. Per cent of market held by your firm's principal product lines? | | |

(Score yourself 10 per cent for each honest "yes" answer. Eighty per cent equals knowledgeability; 50 per cent, moderately informed; 30 per cent, economic and business illiteracy; 100 per cent, probable executive potential. Answers to first five on page 19. Answers to remaining vary with firm. If doubtful or answered "no" to these, look up correct answer in appropriate reference for healthful self-discipline. Your firm's annual report, if a good report, should answer most of them. It should be kept within three feet of you at all times.)

investment, cost of sales, mill cost, industrial wholesale price index ratio to weighted average company price index—just to select a few elementary subjects at random. Comparable topics could be chosen for a welfare agency or any other institution.

Sad to say, the first startled reaction is likely to be: "What has all this got to do with public relations?"

The answer: A great deal. Are you going to produce a television show on accelerated depreciation? No. But are you going to deal intelligently with the management on these subjects so that

you can be welcomed at the "policy-making level" and be of some real use there? That is the question. Any public relations man who doubts this should perhaps seriously examine himself as to whether he has really chosen his proper life's work.

Just consider—if there is one principle upon which every public relations practitioner would agree, it is this: The first and indispensable step in this calling is to win and retain the confidence of the management. Without that, we are paralyzed; we cannot perceive the real

Continued on Following Page

"We cannot get others to understand what we cannot understand ourselves"

problems of the business or institution except faintly and from afar; we must fumble and guess in diagnosis; our advice, if heeded at all, will not get through with effective force. We shall be as the lawyer in whom the client will not confide.

Put yourself in the place of the management whose confidence you must have at all costs. Visualize yourself as a busy top executive whose life is filled with perplexities and problems such as the availability of working capital, the trend of the cash position, the level of accounts receivable, and fiendish murmurs along the Potomac about new and cruel taxation torments to upset all sensible planning.

In the midst of such meditations, the phone rings and your public relations man is on the line. As you drag your mind away from the labyrinth of horrors, what is your first feeling? Is it this?—"Here is a sympathetic soul who knows the path I plod, who would lighten my cross if he could, and maybe he can. He understands things and talks my language; his ideas and suggestions make sense in the light of business realities; he is a companion and fellow wayfarer on this perilous journey. I shall not have to stop and give him an hour's patient education on some fundamental that ought to be second nature to him. He takes an interest, and I am glad to hear his pleasant voice amid this day's woes. I must see more of this lad; he is varsity grade and does me good."

Or will you be thinking something like this?—"Oh, Lord! Another problem! Here is 'the news release man. I

must remember that he comes from another world and speaks another language. Mustn't use big words on him; it'll scare him. He lives a sheltered life. Pleasant chap, of course; knows his journalism, good on the platform. Wants to get some headlines with a detailed statement about our research plans for the next three years. How can I find the words to make him understand that our competitors would give a right arm apiece for that information? Talks about needing the ear of management. Well, he's got my ear; the question is, how am I going to get it back? Oh, Lord! Thy will be done. But if this cup of sorrow can be removed from the policy-making level, perhaps we can make some policy."

The foregoing omits reference to those advantages of knowing the business which are more obvious. They are no less important. The saints of old respected the great principle of evangelism, that self-formation comes first. They expressed it this way: "You can't give what you haven't got." Today's salesmen say you must know your product. The experienced public relations man says you can't create understanding for something you don't understand.

If you are tempted to believe that this is all well known and heeded by public relations people, there is a deceptively simple and very revealing test you can make. This was originally devised in the steel-trap mind of a genial educator. It creates no public embarrassment; it brings home the truth clearly and quickly. It is painful, but one suffers in private.

Assemble a group of your staff associates and give each a blank sheet of paper. Ask them to number lines from one to 10 and answer merely "yes" or "no" to each of 10 questions you will ask. Explain that papers will not be collected, but will be scored by each man himself and will be immediately destroyed by him. Only *he* will know the result. Point out that there is thus every reason to be strictly honest, and no reason not to be.

Have ready 10 questions calling for basic data well above kindergarten level but which anyone presuming to play a significant role in your particular industry or institution could fairly be expected to answer. The accompanying test was designed for industrial public relations people; there should be no trouble in drawing up others for other fields. Decimal-fine answers are not needed. But informed people can be expected to be aware of past trends and current magnitudes of key indicator data.

Some of the questions should relate to national or world conditions bearing on the enterprise; the others should relate directly to the enterprise. A fair question for a worker in the vineyard of industrial public relations might be:

"Can you give the latest Department of Commerce index of industrial production and say how it has been trending in the last three years?"

The effect of this test on anyone who is obliged to write "no" eight or 10 times is jarring and salutary. It slams home the truth of the great pedagogical maxim which gathers more meaning the

Continued on Page 18

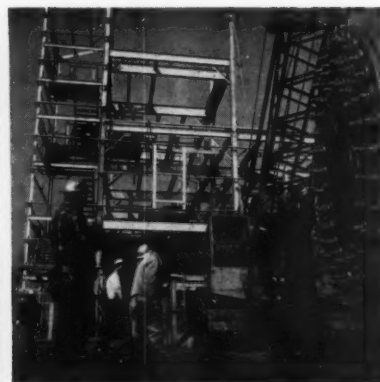
THREE SOURCES OF STRENGTH:



FINANCIAL PAGE



BOOK LEARNIN'



FIELD TRIPS

If the men who
own American business
are important PR targets
for you . . .

You can, of course, reach "management men" through any of a long list of publications.

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Tremors North Of the Border

by CLIFFORD W. HALE

Manager, Public Relations

Canadian Westinghouse Company Limited

The PR storm signals are up in Canada—mainly over the post-war bogey of U. S. financial control and Canada's destiny as a junior partner in the defense of North America. There is a good deal of patriotic speculation about the eventual outcome of a tidal wave of U. S. corporate and private investment. This concern, whether it is real or imagined, has, of course, been diplomatically played down. The main reason is because U. S. investment and risk capital is a desirable and much-needed commodity today on the Canadian economic scene.

The big question in Canada, of course, is how much U. S. investment is enough? Has the post-war U. S. investment been too rapid? Is Canada in danger of selling its birthright of raw materials for limited or token participation in the fruits of its many foreign-owned enterprises?

To moralize on the issue of U. S.-Canadian relations may sound naive because economic considerations continue to talk louder than political principles—and the realist has a tendency to exploit only the present. Enough fast bucks often turn the tide of opinion—and wise precautions for the future are still-born. Nevertheless, the present fear and concern in Canada about its economic relationship with the U. S. is currently one of the most friction-packed issues on the Canadian scene.

The legislative battle this spring over the Trans-Canada Pipe Line, in the Canadian House of Commons, touched off a political mêlée seldom witnessed in our formal, law-abiding community. This was indicative of the undercurrent of opinion, and resentment against too much outside domination and control of our natural resources.

Judicious exploitation, and investment, in Canadian resources, in manufacturing, and economic development, has been welcomed and continues to be popular. The pressure to utilize more of our resources is understood. Paradoxically, however, Canadians have not demonstrated as much enthusiasm or optimism as they might in promoting their own resource development. Being too close to the trees has encouraged more staid domestic investment practices with the result that much of the risk capital for a century has come from outside of Canada.

The sudden inflow of U. S. capital since World War II has been unprecedented—and in such volume that it has not been immediately comprehensible to most Canadians whose perspectives are, quite logically, limited to an economy which at present only supports 16 million people.

Canada's postwar economic destiny was hardly foreseen, nor was it anticipated by economists, government officials, and others whose perception is supposedly clairvoyant on these matters. So it comes as somewhat of a shock to Canadians in the year 1956 to discover that U. S. interests now control more than half of Canadian manufacturing. Side by side with this



The Peace Tower, Parliament Buildings, Ottawa

U. S. firms operating in Canada face major public relations problems as the Dominion flexes muscles

vast industrial expansion has come a network of trade unions bent on exerting its influence, too.

The cascade of U. S. dollars pouring into Canada since 1945 currently amounts to about \$3 million a day for the past ten years. Parent organizations in the U. S. control 98 per cent of our auto industry, 75 per cent of our mining industry, 39 per cent of our pulp and paper, and substantial high percentages in the oil, electrical, rubber, food, pharmaceutical, paint, chemical, and other industries.

The sensitivities of the Canadian public have been stirred by this awareness of potential U. S. economic and defense domination—with a regrettable inclination to accept the inevitable if the inevitable has prosperous overtones. History seems to be repeating itself in this new 20th century cycle of economic and investment growth.

Before 1900, the country's capital flowed freely from Britain, and the political ties with the British Commonwealth worked hand in hand for reasonable harmony. The aftermath of two world wars, however, has stimulated the development of both a primary and secondary manufacturing economy which are rapidly becoming more and more dependent on the U. S. Significantly enough, industry has now begun to displace the nation's traditional agrarian and resource economy.

Conscious of this new industrial maturity, and an increasing political recognition in world affairs, Canadians have begun to demonstrate some modest pride in, and a desire for, their own economic and cultural achievements. These latent ambitions quite naturally have encouraged a sense of growing up. A new and more virile appreciation for things Canadian is stirring. To be thwarted of achieving this new-found national outlook after several centuries of adolescent apprenticeship to Britain and the U. S., conjures up the bogey of a new form of Colonial servitude. Freedom-loving Canadians do not readily relish the prospects, and the present trend toward increasing dependence on the U. S.

How does all this affect your public relations in Canada? If you have, on occasion, confessed to some ignorance and indifference as to the need for public relations effort in Canada, you could be derelict in your public relations responsibilities, and in your future assessment of the need for public relations, if you do not recognize the symptoms of emotional unrest in Canada today.

First, however, be assured that this article is not intended as an indictment of people or policy, or as a lesson in local economics. It is simply a challenge to anyone in public relations to focus attention on a situation which calls for some international fence-mending with more than a mere transplanting of the New York, Chicago, Boston or San Francisco techniques. It is not that Canada is different; it is simply dis-

Continued on Page 21



Electrical Gear at Hamilton



Textile Fibers at Kingston



Aluminum in British Columbia

What's the Good Word?

Although our techniques of communicating with each other get better every year, we still suffer under the handicaps of words that mean different things to each of us

by CHARLES H. PROUT
Public Relations Director
Mead Johnson & Company
Evansville, Indiana

The hue and cry which went up around the world when John Foster Dulles' "brink of war" policy was publicized a few months ago, tended to obscure one basic fact:

There was nothing so vitally wrong or unusual about the policy.

There was little difference between his theory and Teddy Roosevelt's long accepted "carry a big stick" policy of the turn of the century. Nor was it much different in principle from the widely heralded Truman Doctrine of only a few years ago.

The trouble with Mr. Dulles' statement was its semantics. He used the wrong words to describe what we'll assume at least was the right policy.

It's a lot different to say the U. S. will go to the brink of war to achieve its objective than to say, for example, "here's a defense line around Formosa and we'll fight anybody who crosses it." Both statements may involve going to

the brink of war, but one has the U. S. as the aggressor while the other has the enemy as the initiator, a very important point when dealing with large masses of the public, as we PR men know.

But, while we may recognize the validity of that principle, do we always apply it to our own jobs and our own organizations?

I think you'll agree with me that we do not.

Most of us are so busy performing the more tangible parts of our jobs—publicity, house organs, annual reports, plant tours, etc., we tend to overlook the more nebulous (but perhaps more vital) phase of public relations which calls for us to serve as guardians of our companies' semantics.

For instance, how many disgruntled employees have been created for your firm by well-meaning executives who have referred to time and motion studies

as "efficiency programs" rather than "job improvement programs"?

Or, how many neighbors in your community have been alienated by a publicly declared corporate policy to the effect that

"local suppliers will be used only if their prices are competitive with those of outside firms."

The same point could have been made equally as well—and much more palatably—by saying

"We will always favor local suppliers when making our purchases, as long as they offer competitive prices."

Of course, it's not easy for us as PR men to keep track of all the letters and policy statements emanating from our organizations.

Certainly we can't go around looking over everyone else's shoulders—that's a sure way to alienate friends and foster

CHARLES H. PROUT is public relations director of Mead Johnson & Company of Evansville, Indiana, manufacturers of nutritional and pharmaceutical products. A native of New Jersey, he was graduated from Rutgers University in 1941. He served as an Army public relations officer in the U. S. and Europe for four years during World War II, emerging with the rank of major. Since the war he has been associated closely with the pharmaceutical industry, serving with the Wm. S. Merrell Company in Cincinnati and the Vick Chemical Company in New York prior to joining Mead Johnson & Company in 1954 to organize the PR department and program. He is a frequent contributor to trade journals and has also free lanced articles to leading publications including *Colliers*, *Coronet*, *Redbook*, and others.

THE LEXICOGRAPHY

"LOADED" WORDS

Affair—Association
Suite—Hotel Room
Yacht—Boat
Night Club—Restaurant
Junket—Trip
Smirk—Smile
Estate—Home
Dominant—Major
Industrialist—Manufacturer
Exploit—Develop
Scheme—Plan
Expose—Uncover
Pensioned—Retired

FINANCIAL JARGON

Surplus
Debentures
Depreciation
Obsolescence
Amortization
Fiduciary

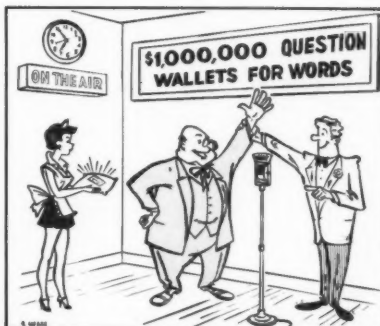
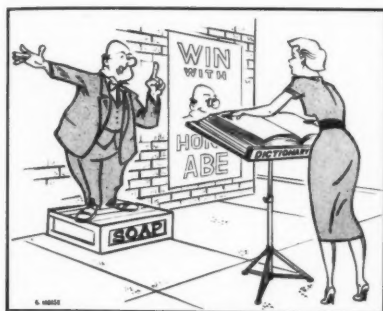
Vesting
Preferred

CHAMELEON WORDS

Arbitration
Monopoly
Liberal
Security
Underprivileged
Merger
Speculation
Capitalistic

"BAD" WORDS

Sly
Skulking
Clandestine
Furtive
Ruse
Blame
Conspire
Intrigue



bad public relations for the public relations department.

Nor is it appropriate that we prepare all major correspondence and other statements for our companies. Such an arrangement would be inefficient and the workload would tend to build our staffs into top-heavy positions.

But it seems to me we can effectively discharge our responsibilities if we have an opportunity to routinely review all such organization documents before they are released. That is an arrangement we have developed recently at Mead Johnson and Company—and it seems to be working well so far. Perhaps it would be useful to you, too.

Just as most major matters are submitted to the legal department for a check on legal technicalities, so are they reviewed by our public relations department for a check on semantics and general public relations acceptability. The

procedure is simple and places no undue burden on our department.

It's not that we're such omniscient foreseers of trouble. Nor is it that someone else in the organization couldn't recognize a bad semantical phrase just as well as we could. It's just that management feels it's our responsibility to catch *more* flaws *more* times than anyone else in the outfit. After all, semantics is our business.

It seems to me that is the point on which top management has to be sold—and top management is the group which has to put such a procedure into effect. By profession we PR people are trained to have one ear attuned to the public's whims . . . its unpredictable fancies . . . and to the press' idiosyncrasies. It would appear to be wasteful shortsightedness on the part of our companies if those talents were not used to help keep the corporation's foot out of its mouth. And

it would be wasteful of us on our own parts if we didn't make an effort to put these additional capacities of ours to work for the good of our companies.

Of course, it's not always easy for management to see the need for such a service. Usually you don't worry about something as intangible as semantics until you've been burned. It's up to us to point the way.

Our job as PR indoctrinators has been helped appreciably in recent years by well-publicized "horrible examples." Our bosses have learned, along with Charlie Wilson, that no matter how true the statement may be you don't say "What's good for General Motors is good for the country."

Here are some other examples from public life which were highlighted by Lyle C. Wilson, vice president of the United Press, in a recent article in the Public Relations Journal. They may be useful in bolstering your presentation to management:

"Back in 1937, F.D.R. proposed that Congress work over the Supreme Court," says Mr. Wilson. "To his supporters, F.D.R. had proposed to REFORM the Court. His opponents said he sought to PACK it. The United Press, seeking an objective word, called it an effort to REORGANIZE the Court."

Mr. Wilson continues with some more questions in semantics: "How significant is it that the electrical utilities are confronted always with the phrase PUBLIC power? Would it be possible to deal differently with a certain section of the Revenue Act if its purpose were not universally tagged as being the recapture of EXCESS profits? And is it a fair shake to call a rapid amortization a FAST TAX write-off?"

But it isn't necessary for us to go to government and public life to find all our examples . . . or to demonstrate the importance of semantics to the average

Continued on Page 26

OF MISUNDERSTANDING

FIGHTING WORDS

Contention—Suggestion
Claim—Believe
Instruct—Tell
Sneak—Enter Quietly
Tipped Off—Notified
Refused—Regretted
Revealed—Showed
Alias—Pseudonym
Rejected—Declined
Efficiency—Improvement
Suppress—Deemphasize
Stealthy—Quiet

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Communications
Photograph (measure)
Blurb
Puff-plug
Workshop
Grapevine

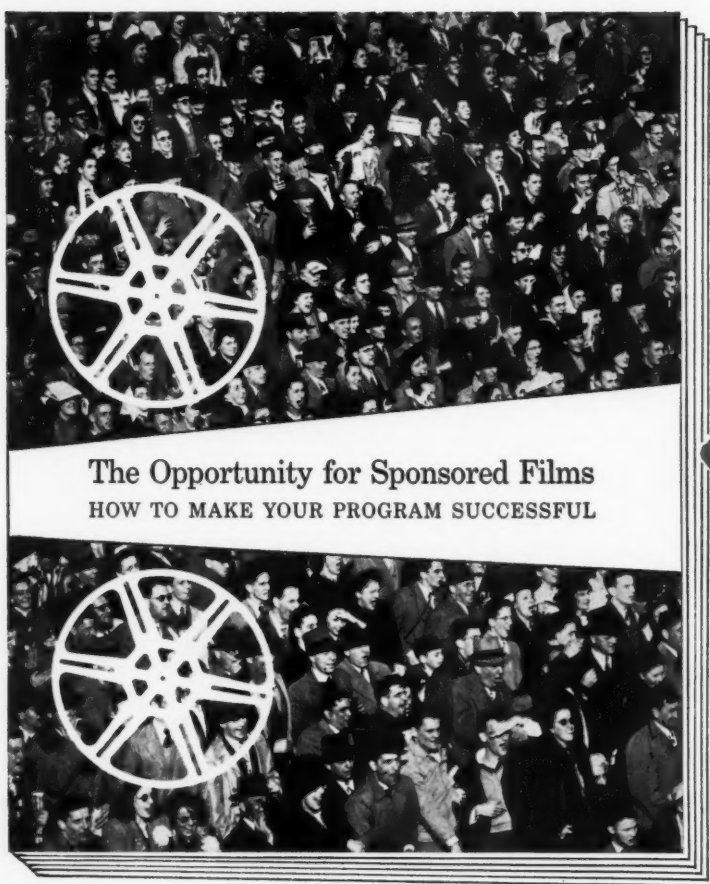
Ballyhoo
Pitch

INSURANCE JARGON

Carrier
Appurtenant
Liability
Inception
Stipulations
Subrogated
Assignment
Apportionment

"GOOD" WORDS

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Springtime
Melodious
Harmonious
Gain
Freedom
Pleasure
Beauty



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At Boston University's School of Public Relations an open house day for high school students describes the facilities available and outlines the areas of public relations interest.

LIVELY CONTROVERSY exists over education best suited to equip young men and women for work in profession with advocates of both generalized and special study taking the stand

By HALE NELSON
Vice President
Illinois Bell Telephone Co.

Training for Public Relations

An intelligent, promising youngster just out of high school has his mind set on a career in public relations. How should the college prepare him?

Some day there will be a clear-cut answer to that question. But as of now there's absolutely no agreement on what constitutes the proper educational background for a PR career.

A wide diversity of opinion prevails, not only among the educators themselves, but among public relations practitioners—and the great body of PR people simply yawn at the question.

After two years of delving into this subject as chairman of PRSA's National

Education Committee, what do I find? Among the practitioners, certainly no ground swell of concern about professional education. That's not to say there's no interest; among some it's intense. But the majority's attitude is one of apathy.

In the educational field, on the other hand, there's plenty of enthusiasm if not unanimity. Whether PRSA members or not, educators are giving thoughtful and earnest attention to the problem of how best to prepare young people for a profession that's not a profession. They are setting the pace for public relations people.

It should be the other way around.

Take the findings of a study made within the last year. Some 653 colleges and universities replied to the Education Committee's questionnaire.

One out of 10 of these institutions offer public relations training to career-minded students.

A total of 136 schools recognize academic training for PR varying from integrating the principles in other courses to a full curriculum in a School of Public Relations.

The student has a choice of 14 schools offering a major or something more extensive. He can choose the West Coast, the Middle West, or the East in considerable variety. If "he" is a woman,

she can take a full course in a Down East college for women.

The student can have undergraduate or graduate work.

If he doesn't want to major in PR, but wants to take fewer courses directly bearing on public relations, he can choose from among 29 other schools which offer a sequence of public relations courses.

Nineteen other schools offer two or more PR courses as electives.

The student will find most of his choices among Schools of Journalism. Forty-eight of the colleges responding to the questionnaire have departments or schools of Journalism; of these, 36 offer specific training in public relations.

Twenty-five schools report PR teaching in departments of Liberal Arts and Sciences, Schools of Education, Speech, General Studies, etc.*

As an augury of the future, one out of four of the colleges *without* public re-

Continued on Following Page

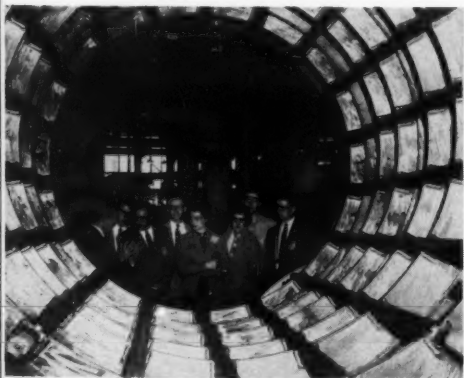
HALE NELSON since 1946 has been vice president of the Illinois Bell Telephone Company. He began his career as a reporter on the St. Louis Post-Dispatch, and in 1925 moved to California where he worked on newspapers before joining the Bell System with the Southwestern Bell Telephone Company in St. Louis in 1927. He became advertising manager and in May, 1937, went with Illinois Bell Telephone Company in Chicago as general information supervisor, and a year later became general information manager. Mr. Nelson is now serving his second term as Chairman of the PRSA National Education Committee. He is also a member of the Board and was formerly president of PRSA's Chicago chapter.

*Some 30 schools of Business Administration reported teaching public relations courses. But there appear to be at least 200 schools or departments of business which do not expose the embryo businessman to any public relations principles to round out his academic business training. The Education Committee is currently exploring this interesting avenue under the chairmanship of James W. Lee, II of Detroit.

PREPARING FOR PRACTICE



*General College Work**



*Specialized Studies***



Adult Education



Related Experience

lations courses say they anticipate future interest in such training. Several are on the verge: One reported it was making a study to establish a definite curriculum in PR, and hoped the course would be available to start with the academic year 1956-57. Another said it would be interested in instituting such courses into its Business Administration course of study.

What's more, educators are trying to keep pace with a growing profession by redesigning courses and curricula: 35% of the schools with PR courses have added to or modified the public relations curriculum in the last two years, and 42% say they would like to change their PR curriculum.

The extent of public relations education gives us only one dimension of the whole picture. *What is taught* is a more significant measurement.

A questionnaire is, at best, a poor gauge for analyzing this important question. Short of visiting schools and similar diligent digging, we in the profession just can't know. Catalog listings of curricula content provide some clues.

One very reassuring finding is the practically universal agreement that all public relations career education should be founded on at least two years of liberal arts. This is true of the School of Public Relations at Boston University and 99% of the curricula studied.

What happens in the junior and senior years varies greatly. The Journalism-oriented PR teaching will bear down heavily on written communication. In the liberal arts-oriented school there is greater emphasis on the social sciences. A quick over-all look at course subjects would indicate that in the aggregate, nearly twice as many vocational or craft subjects are offered as those equipping the student with underlying PR principles or philosophies.

What should the breakdown be? Ask the PR practitioner and you get a diversity of opinion that is a crazy quilt. I have had the advantage of many expressed viewpoints — which I solicited and which I gratefully acknowledge. The favor I can do in return is to leave their names off their comments. (Education is controversy.)

One says: "I would rather have a good graduate of a good liberal arts college than an honors man from the best four-year undergraduate public relations (specialty) course in any college in the country."

One puts it this way—"Undergraduate work after liberal arts foundation, should emphasize expression, writing and PR

technique." From there he would have the training go into the broad philosophical aspects — social science, psychology, with research to test effectiveness of various media.

Another says flatly, "It would be a mistake for anyone to major in public relations in college. The objective should be to become as broadly informed, cultured and intelligent a person as possible."

Still another: "It's much easier to find graduates who have had basic training in principles of public relations than to find one who has really fundamental training in the use of the English language . . ."

Some of our PR thinkers stoutly assert that public relations education should be offered only at the graduate level; e.g., "It does not seem that we should sacrifice any part of the liberal arts training before we can pinpoint the areas where specialized training is needed."

But, says a West Coast professional: "Many good PR potentials can't afford graduate work." Furthermore, he says, "graduate work will not be entirely effective until after an apprenticeship in writing and some worldly experience with some of the public relations problems."

Agrees the East Coast: "It isn't sensible to use a two-ton press to cut cookies. At the present time the public relations problems do not seem to me to require graduate study for their successful execution."

One of our public relations leaders, already quoted in part above, concludes: "The thing we should concern ourselves with is the problem of teaching public relations *thinking*. The best way to teach is by the case method. It is used successfully in law and in business administration where you are trying to teach an approach to a way of thinking through a problem rather than a bunch of facts. It is ideally suited to the teaching of public relations."

There does seem to be an area of general agreement among educators on the question of help from PRSA. Professional assistance by PRSA would be welcome, most (but not all) say, in matters of

- curriculum design
- joint discussions between educators and practitioners
- furnishing case histories
- apprenticeship plans
- vocational guidance

Here are a few of their specific suggestions: *Continued on Page 20*

*On the campus at Georgetown University

**Public Relations class at Boston U. touring an industrial plant.

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Deadliest Pitfall

Continued from Page 8

more you think about it: "You only know what you remember." Test papers need not be collected but the results can clearly be read in faces. Anyway, the purpose is really not to test, but to teach. That is the beauty of it.

Anyone achieving a fair score is not likely to do as did one youngster soon after he was employed by the public relations department of a major corporation listed for generations as a blue chip on the New York Stock Exchange.

"By the way," he said to the president at a press luncheon, "I've saved up a little money. How do I go about buying some shares of the company's stock?"

This really happened.

The objection may be offered, with some justice, that all this places too much emphasis on finance and economics. "We are not raising our public relations boys to be accountants," said one offended associate. Of course not, and I must confess to singling out one aspect of industrial life to emphasize a point.

Another test, to be sure, could easily be drawn up to cover the enormously complex field of labor-management relations—a field loaded with actual and potential problems of public relations. And still other fields could be selected. But certainly, in industry, there are few subjects more basic and none in which some reasonable knowledgeability is more imperative than in the area of finance and economics. There is no area in which it is easier to convict yourself, out of your own mouth, in three minutes, as being a man who knows little and cares less.

The importance of these matters to industrial public relations was never

more convincingly illustrated than by an amazing survey of foremen and executives conducted by the Opinion Research Corporation. It revealed that *even in industry* large numbers of people, even some at high levels, were grossly misinformed or uninformed about the barest facts of industrial life—so much so that if their beliefs were given legislative expression, the people's capitalism, if you will, or free competitive enterprise, would cease to exist.

The survey showed widespread belief in such concepts as the following: Any company that makes 100 million dollars in profits in one year is very probably making too much profit. When a company stops paying dividends it is no concern of employees, but merely something for directors and officers to worry about. Government price control can be established without affecting the average man's personal freedom. Workers make more money today than 30 years ago but are worse off because prices have gone up. In the same period, dividends have increased faster than wages. Company profit not paid out in dividends should be taxed heavily because it is idle money. In the average industry, of each dollar divided between owners and workers, the owners get at least 80 cents.

These are just a few of 61 topics dealt with in the survey. The results were frightening. They represent both a reproach and a challenge to industrial public relations. But the most disturbing result was this: When the survey was applied to industrial public relations practitioners, many of them failed to do much better than the average. These are the men who are supposed to be the very missionaries of industry.

This vital principle of learning the business is certainly not restricted to those whose practice lies in industry. What would we think of a hospital public relations man who was tongue-tied when the conversation got around to the number of beds needed per thousand of population, the out-patient load, or the trend of pressure on the charity wards? Or how much confidence could we place in the public relations counsel of a child welfare agency who showed no concern whatever about the incidence of broken homes?

Nor is emphasis on this principle intended to disparage public relations technique. Public relations, if practiced as it should be, is one of the most exacting of all vocations. It calls for sure mastery of the tools. It would be non-

sense to minimize the things demanded for this difficult work—the vision, the sure judgment, the sensitivity to public mood, the gifts of expression, the awareness of ends and means, the sense of timing, the intimate knowledge of communications media. But all these can be thwarted by ignorance of the subject to which they are applied. Technique is not enough. *We have got to know what we are talking about.*

This does not mean that we need to be expert financiers or statisticians, or specialists in labor relations or production. It does mean that we have got to be well informed in our respective fields of practice. If you ran into some trouble with the accompanying test, it does not necessarily mean that you are a dumb; if it did, you could not have been engaged in industrial public relations practice for very long. But it's symptomatic. It means that you probably have been too preoccupied with routine to keep up with a larger world. We all get too immersed at times in the minutiae of clear and present problems. This is a plea for a broader outlook, a wider and deeper identification with the vital affairs of that for which we are expected to provide counsel and advocacy.

Don't think the lawyers and doctors don't know the importance of this. If you happen to be involved in a lawsuit about transmission gears, and have a good lawyer, when you walk into the courtroom you will be amazed to discover that your lawyer will seem to have spent his entire life with transmission gears. You will wonder how he ever could have found time to study some law. If you are smitten with Morton's toe, and have a good doctor, you will writhe and fume while he doggedly makes a long inventory of your family history, your occupation, your habits and hobbies, your last 15 colds in the head, and everything else in the world that, seemingly to you, has nothing whatever to do with Morton's toe. He does this because he is a pro. And so are you.

You can take it for granted that your lawyer knows his torts and pleas, his contracts and negotiable instruments; also, that your doctor knows his pharmacopoeia, his symptomatology, his biology and bacteriology. But when these men are good, really good, they also know *you*—you, and all your problems, including some that you don't even realize yourself that you may have. Public relations—*professional* public relations—must go and do likewise.

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Public Relations at the White House

Continued from Page 5

Hagerty was accused of a "snow job," of making political hay by his mass presentation of doctors, of "trying to prove that operations are good for Republicans" and of various other devious crimes, all allied with his cardinal sin of giving out too much information.

A week before the president suffered his intestinal block, Hagerty said in an interview that "once you start this kind of thing, there's no stopping it."

He amplified. He believed that his complete disclosure of all details of Ike's heart attack had set a precedent in White House medical public relations from which there was no turning back. The public henceforth would be satisfied with nothing less than the full, intimate facts about every presidential illness. A week later Hagerty was at Walter Reed Hospital proving the accuracy of his own prophecy.

Never again will a president of the United States be able to undergo a secret operation, such as that performed on Grover Cleveland in his second term. Doctors knifed out a cancerous section of Cleveland's jaw while the president glided down the East River in New York aboard a borrowed yacht.

Eisenhower's public relations men must be found guilty as charged in the

double indictment — concealing too much information and giving out too much of the same commodity.

All this has been from the angle of the taxpayer. What about the ability of the Eisenhower public relations men from the viewpoints of their clients, the Eisenhower administration and the Republican party?

Before he became public relations director of the Republican national committee, L. Richard Guylay confided that he believed a major failure of the Republican party had been its inability to convince the average Joe that he was better off under a Republican regime.

If you assume that the Republican program provides superior benefits for the common man—and let's assume it for a moment just to carry on without a political hassle—here is ideal ground for testing the merits of the big wheels of G.O.P. public relations.

If the product was good, why didn't Mr. Man-In-The-Street buy it years ago? After almost four years of the Eisenhower administration, has he bought it yet?

Unfortunately there is no sure method of telling whether he has or not. On the credit side of Hagerty, Guylay & Co., they can point to polls which show that a larger percentage of voters now think that the Republican party is best equipped to keep America prosperous. This reverses a long-time trend. For years more people replied "Democratic party" when asked this question.

Other polls indicate that a majority of union members now prefer the Eisenhower administration despite the affinity of an overwhelming number of labor leaders for the Democrats.

But polls, as we found out in 1948, are only polls. In the acid test of the ballot box, Hagerty, Guylay & Co. haven't done very well. The nation has rushed into Democratic arms through most available channels ever since the Eisenhower team came to power. The Republicans lost both branches of Congress in 1954, surrendered a pack of governorships to the Democrats and dropped an embarrassing number of local elections in 1953 and 1955.

True, Ike wasn't running. But that's beside the question. No one doubts Ike's popularity, with or without public relations counsel. The big issue is whether Ike's PR men have persuaded a majority of voters that Republicans are as good for the country as operations are good for Republicans.

On that issue, the jury is still out.

ANSWERS TO KNOWLEDGEABILITY TEST ON PAGE 7

1. About 115; steady in recent years, now slowly rising.
2. \$1.98 (June); rising in recent years at a rate of 2 to 6 per cent per year.
3. \$403 billion, first quarter, 1956, at annual rate; up from \$328 billion in 1951.
4. 512.98 as of mid-July (16th). Rising rapidly in recent years; up from 216 monthly average for 1951.
5. \$276 billion, up from \$255 billion in fiscal 1951. Budget showed a surplus of \$1.7 billion.

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Training For PR

Continued from Page 16

"You can help most by actively providing summer and graduation job opportunities to graduates who have majored in public relations. Schools offering PR majors strongly need your support, not just your vocal support."

"You can enable teachers to gain much needed refresher experience by setting up some form of summer internship. This is done for advertising and journalism professors, and it should be possible for public relations teachers also."

"There should be much closer relationship between educators and public relations personnel. I've been trying for five years now to secure actual prospectus used by public relations firms in trying to secure an account. I've had very little success . . . How does one go about lining up an account; what charges should one make, etc.? The texts are far too vague about details which are all-important in the field."

"We want now to do more in apprenticeships so our students can obtain more experience in PR work while in school."

"You should help sponsor research."

In addition, educators suggested that PRSA

- provide good speakers for the classroom
- integrate teachers into industrial programs for an interchange of ideas
- provide local PRSA committee for assisting educators with teaching problems

The National Education Committee believes the educators' suggestions and requests for assistance from PR professional people are reasonable and should be acted upon vigorously. This conviction has the support of PRSA's Board of Directors. It has authorized the Committee to embark on a college relations program which could have many ramifications. A folder, "What PR People Do", is under preparation. A chapter guide on educational liaison is being assembled.

Furthermore, educators need to know how many college-trained young people are going to be hired in the next few years for public relations work — and what sort of equipment those graduates should have. The Education Committee is actively probing for just that kind of information.

A vocational guidance survey soon to go out should disclose for the first time what job opportunities there are in public relations for college-trained people. The study should also determine what standards have been set for PR employment, and what our personnel needs are — qualitatively and quantitatively — in the next 5 years.

The questionnaire, if it breaks through the members' apparent indifference to the subject, will provide valuable help for schools and students. The vocational guidance sub-committee, under Felton Gordon of Atlanta, hopes for thoughtful answers to such questions as:

What are the job titles, principal functions and salary ranges for your people with total public relations experience of five years or less?

Have you ever hired a college graduate without business experience for any of these jobs?

From what main sources do you obtain your public relations people? (Colleges—employment agencies—

transfers from other departments—mail or personal applications—directly from newspapers—other)

What would you describe as your most important problem in connection with hiring?

How do you determine aptitudes and potentials of applicants? (A PRSA committee has done some excellent pilot work in this field)

How do you feel about the kind of public relations vocational guidance college students are getting?

Would you be interested in hiring an apprentice or a public relations teacher for summer work?

When we begin to find out what sort of background public relations people want their future business applicants to have, we will begin to give the educators the help they need. Thus, as a Society, we will at least be on our way towards remedying the lack of leadership I bemoaned earlier.

If we think *no* vocational public relations subjects need to be taught in college, let's tell them. If we'd like more, ditto. If we are for pure liberal arts, for business school teaching, for more social sciences, mass communication, philosophy of public opinion and propaganda, for graduate work, for apprentices, etc., let's say so—and if possible to what degree. The educators can take it from there.

The day is coming faster than we know when the public relations professional will deal with new standards, new levels of skills and proficiency. Tomorrow's PR man must possess the discernment, perspicacity and abilities that bear on the long range objectives of his enterprise. He had better look to his basic grounding in academic theory, business education and communication skills.

What happens when the PR man of 1965 meets up with the product of today's highly developed business selection and training process—the man with his solid academic business start, his carefully rotated company training, his summer company-paid college seminar courses, and his advanced company management institute polish? Will they talk the same language?

As I see it, our problem of the future is to be a professional among professionals. That status starts in the colleges today. There is plenty of murk now in the education question. The present state of affairs calls for more light and more leadership. And, as usual, it's later than we think.

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Tremors North Of the Border

Continued from Page 11

tinct, and often at variance with the concept of Canada at your home base.

Observations on public relations performance of many U. S.-owned companies in Canada lead to the conclusion that the example set at home does not always apply in Canada. The very lack of such policy, and application, tends to exaggerate the impression that the management, or the officials concerned with company policy, do not feel the Canadian counterpart rates any special attention. This becomes somewhat obvious when the communications overflow between Canada and the U. S. exposes the lack of follow-through at the subsidiary, or corporate level in Canada.

Generally speaking, Canadians, due to their affinity with U. S. business and culture, are vastly better informed on U. S. affairs, history and events than the average John Doe in the U. S. is informed about Canada. This is sometimes embarrassing to U. S. business executives who have a habit of underestimating the Canadian's knowledge and appreciation of conditions as they apply in the U. S. Sixteen million Canadians, for example, spend more money on travel in a year in the U. S. than 160 million U. S. residents reciprocate in travel in Canada. Canadians are much more familiar with social, economic and cultural events in the U. S. than is generally appreciated. This knowledge and familiarity with the U. S. scene can be both consoling and disturbing.

There is, therefore, a built-in curiosity as well as a constant awareness among

CLIFFORD W. HALE has been engaged in public relations and allied activities—advertising, sales promotion, publicity, editing and publishing for more than twenty years.

It began at Canada's McMaster University where he helped to found and edit the *McMaster Silhouette*, a student newspaper which has since won many awards for campus journalism. Since 1952 he has been public relations manager of Canadian Westinghouse Company Limited.

Well known throughout the public relations and advertising fields in Canada, he is a director of the Canadian Public Relations Society and this year, was elected vice president for Canada of the Public Relations Society of America.

the Canadian public of what is going on in business, labor and politics in the U. S. There is not the same comparable appreciation in the U. S. of Canadian activities, and it is not logical to assume there should be!

However, this lack of knowledge and intimacy with Canada may create a vacuum—and with it there develops a tendency to ignore or minimize the necessity for community relations and equally sound corporate public relations effort on the Canadian side of the border. Canadian managements cannot, with any discretion, insist on similar services and attention. Often they do not recognize the significance of good public relations until an emergency arises. Frequently the size and scope of the Canadian operation does not logically permit an equivalent public relations overhead. "Let's handle it from the U. S." is the stock answer.

When you decide to handle it from head office, be sure you appreciate what this means. Does it mean perpetuating the impression the company or organization is managed and controlled exclusively from the home office? Does it accent the fact there is little or no local autonomy inherent in the Canadian management organization? Does it suggest, in effect, that Canada might well be a forgotten community?

To illustrate this point, I am reminded of a story concerning a reception in Toronto for a big U. S. corporation president. The visiting public relations man who organized the event discovered, to his consternation, that an aged, venerable old character midway down the reception line was being greeted with great enthusiasm and deference by the guests—so much so that the big wheel at the end of the line was obviously a stranger at his own reception.

Turning to one of the Canadian public relation boys, he ordered him to "... get that old fossil out of the line—he's messing up the boss' reception." To which the sad, but wiser, local boy replied: "That is so and so—the first president of the Canadian company, its founder, and a very prominent citizen—and his personal friends are legion." Needless to say, better public relations judgment prevailed at this point.

Not long ago a local U. S.-owned industry suspended publication of its employee newspaper, and decided to contribute its Canadian news to the parent employee paper published in the mid-west. One wonders where and how

Continued on Page 25



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Books in Review

MIRACLE OF WORLD WAR II, by Francis Walton. New York, MacMillan, 1956. \$7.50.



Reviewed by
JOHN W. VANCE
Assistant Director
Public Relations
International
Harvester Company

The late Joseph Stalin said it in the fewest words during the Teheran Conference when he lifted his glass "to American production, without which the war would have been lost."

Hanson W. Baldwin, the military analyst of the *New York Times*, said it more fully in 1945 in these words:

"One major lesson—indeed, the major lesson—of this war is plain; yet, so far, it has been overlooked in Washington. It should be stated and restated, emphasized and re-emphasized, so that Americans will never forget.

"The war against Germany was won, the war against Japan is being won, because of the superiority of the industry of the United States. The industrial strength of America has been the dominating and decisive factor in this war."

Mr. Walton's book is a well-organized and highly readable documentation of those two statements. Its hero is a group-hero, the 200,000 corporations—large,

medium, and small—which constituted America's war industry and the men and women who worked for them.

It is a book for any adult reader. It is also a book which should be of the greatest interest to professional public relations people, both to those whose experience did not include the years of World War II and to those who lived through it and had to deal with many of the problems described.

War is at best a semi-organized confusion, and war as conducted by the New Deal was more confused than most. President Roosevelt set production goals by picking figures out of the air before a radio speech. His Department of Justice throughout the war was busy bringing anti-trust suits against the very companies most deeply involved in the war effort—including General Electric, Standard Oil of New Jersey, Republic Steel, Dow Chemical, Aluminum Corporation, du Pont, and many others.

The industry on which the administration had to rely had been its chief whipping boy for nine years before. It had been through more than a decade of depression. Its efforts were "directed" by officeholders who for the most part knew little of industrial processes and less about industrial organization.

Yet this industry produced 5,600 merchant vessels, 79,000 landing craft, 300,000 warplanes, 2,400,000 military trucks and hundreds of thousands of other vehicles, 41 billion rounds of ammunition, 434,000,000 tons of steel, 2,600,000 machine guns, etc., etc., etc.

In 1944 American industry was producing one plane every five minutes, 150 tons of steel per minute, eight aircraft carriers a month, and 50 merchant ships a day, to carry on a war which was fought beyond every ocean. And all was climaxed by the production of the atomic bomb.

The story of these accomplishments was not well told at the time. Military secrecy forbade it. Even today, few people have any real sense of the magnitude of the job that was done. In view of the circumstances that existed, "miracle" seems a fully-justified word.

In many a corporation's files there are fat volumes which are the history of its own major war projects. This book will provide a framework in which to set

detailed accounts of individual action.

It will also be instructive in the ways of censorship, government regulation, and other matters to those who did not have the experience. It should be particularly enlightening to those who still believe that industry and business act only for profit. And finally—comparing the development and resources of our industry now with American industry of that day—it should be reassuring to those who fear that we might be lightly challenged by another hostile power.

THE POWER ELITE, by C. Wright Mills. New York, Oxford University Press. \$6.



Reviewed by
C. HAROLD KING
Professor of
History
University of Miami
Author of
"A History
of Civilization—
The Story
of Our Heritage"

The atmosphere of the times makes it difficult to evaluate this book. There is, first of all, the distrust between businessmen and intellectuals (Dr. Mills is a Professor of Sociology at Columbia). Professors are often judged to be impractical, absorbed in theory which is not properly related to life; professors, on the other hand, often say that businessmen do not conduct themselves as they profess.

This lack of harmony is increased by another confusing element of our times: our nervousness about the Communist threat. That danger, however, calls for our best thinking, not unthinking catchwords. Flipping off analyses as "leftist" or "reactionary" discourages the honest searcher for truth.

Dr. Mills' book is a critique of the power (and powers) which rule us. The national Power Elite, he says, is a coalition of three groups: (1) the "political directorate," some fifty odd figures of the executive branch, (2) the "corporate rich" and (3) military and naval top commanders. The first two, the author claims, have always been allies; the general and admirals have penetrated the inner circle in the fifteen years of war and cold war alert. This coalition, Dr. Mills thinks, has destroyed the checks and balances which the founding fathers had in mind. Congress has been relegated to a lesser "middle level" of power. The public hasn't much stake in the sys-

Continued on Page 24

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New Problem of Communications

"The steel strike points up a sizeable problem . . . what is new, and most pertinent to solving the modern-day strike is the indication that a laboring class which is becoming more educated and more articulate with the years is still unable to cope with the intricacies of issues that are becoming more complex with each new contract negotiation.

"This means that there has emerged a new problem of communications with workers . . . almost all of them seemed bogged down when questioned in detail on such issues as the guaranteed annual wage, the company's offer, weekend premium pay, etc."

" . . . Said one worker: 'I sure wish I knew what this was all about. I wish I knew exactly what McDonald wants. No one has ever told me what the issues are.'"

—GODFREY SPERLING, JR., staff correspondent, reporting from Gary, Ind., in the CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MONITOR, July 5, 1956

Minds Not Muscles

"We hear a great deal about automation, a new and convenient name for progress in technology which shifts the burden of physical—and frequently, mental—effort from men to machines. . . . But, if we have less need for strong muscles, we have greater need for alert and vigilant minds."

—EMILE F. du PONT, Director, Employee Relations Department, E. I. du Pont de Nemours & Co., Inc., before American Academy of Occupational Medicine

A Thirty Years War of Ideas

"We are in for 30 years of ideological 'war,' 30 years that will demand the same kind of taxes, of devotion to country above self, and a sacrifice and teamwork that the Second World War demanded.

"In this battle, as professionals and businessmen and as industrialists, we who use our talents to make machines and guns, who man our great communi-

cation forces of TV, publishing, and advertising, who make the products that give us our well-being, who produce the wealth that supports our parks, our charities and our hospitals, our colleges, know in the days ahead we must have men of fiber, trained in teamwork and whose mental machinery is well-housed and driven—men trained to make an all-out sustained effort to drive the banner of successful democracy and free enterprise deep into the thinking of all men."

—CHESTER J. LAROCHE, Chairman of the Board of C. J. LaRoche and Co., a founding director of the Advertising Council, in an interview published by the CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MONITOR, July 3, 1956

On the Future of the World

" . . . the world is not only competitive but it is also stirring with a great hope that the knowledge that can destroy can also bring benefits and richer lives to all mankind.

"To realize these aspirations involves leadership not only in science but also of a more general nature—leadership in the quality of thinking and vision; lead-

ership in finding the solutions to social and political problems; leadership in inspiring the confidence of others."

—NEIL McELROY, President, Procter and Gamble Co., in commencement address, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, June 8, 1956

How Are Yours Today?

"'Public relations'—two words heard so frequently these days people sometimes pass them over too lightly. That's the gist of a talk given the other day by a member of the staff at Miami University, Oxford (Ohio).

"Mr. Bogner, assistant to Miami's president, told of some personal experiments in which he had taken complaints to the heads of five of the largest corporations in the nation and the world. In each case, he said, the top man gave his personal attention to the complaint, explained how the mistake could happen and offered an adjustment that was more than satisfactory.

"Perhaps this explains two things. First, it probably explains why that person is sitting in the top spot in a large enterprise. Second, it undoubtedly exposes the mistake made by so many people when they forget how important are their relations with other people in family life, at work, at play.

"It's mighty easy for a person to forget that his job, for instance, exists because of other people. It's mighty easy to get the idea that the whole universe revolves around one's own job—that other people are to serve you instead of you serving them."

—Lead editorial, THE HAMILTON (Ohio) JOURNAL-NEWS, June 26, 1956

Common and Preferred Dividend Notice

July 25, 1956

The Board of Directors of the Company has declared the following quarterly dividends, all payable on September 1, 1956, to stockholders of record at close of business August 6, 1956:

| Security | Amount per Share |
|---|------------------|
| Preferred Stock, 5.50% First Preferred Series . . . | \$1.37½ |
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| Preferred Stock, 4.75% Convertible Series . . . | \$1.18¾ |
| Preferred Stock, 4.50% Convertible Series . . . | \$1.12½ |
| Common Stock . . . | \$0.35 |

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Books in Review

Continued from Page 22

tem; the masses do not transcend their narrow interests and are furthermore bewildered by conflicting assaults on their attention.

These serious conclusions are not arrived at carelessly. There are quantities of sustaining evidence in the text and forty-eight pages of footnotes to support Dr. Mills' assertions. The data acknowledges other viewpoints, sometimes without comment, sometimes to set up a target for rebuttal. The amount of data brought to bear on a single point may appear excessive to some; to others the citing of several sources will appear necessary for controversial matter.

Nor is the evidence flung at one loosely. The author states in his first chapter what he is going to examine and summarizes his conclusions at the end of the book. Along the way he keeps the reader reminded of themes and sub-themes by skillful paragraph transitions and by summaries at the ends of chapters. This is not undue repetition. We all know of the reader who emerges gaspingly from reading almost any book with only an isolated fact or incident. Dr. Mills intends that we shall know what he means.

There is some good history here. The executive branch has indeed been growing in power in the twentieth century.

Outlines laid down by the founding fathers have been altered since. Some words do not have the same meaning as in the eighteenth or nineteenth centuries; some concepts have been modified.

Dr. Mills is right in pointing out that Americans developed an elite very early. Since the English Colonies were not peopled to any extent by aristocracy, the top class came from our upper middle class. Wealth was the most tangible mark of distinction. A generation or two of wealth made an "old family."

The tangible barrier of wealth was, however, vulnerable to newcomers—especially if they had money. New men kept getting through and new families, after an interval, were accepted. (John Adams was ranked socially at Harvard as fourteenth in a class of twenty-four, but the Adamsons, as we know, rose to become patrician.) Still the line which had to be crossed could be determined. Dr. Mills cites Mrs. John Jay's "Dinner and Supper List of 1787 and 1788" as an example of how easily defined the elite of the late eighteenth century were.

The author does not say (nor does anyone else) that the original elite possessed nothing but money. They were endowed with strong character; they acquired education, graces of living and confidence of the groomed-to-command sort. Our present-day elite have the same combination. But Dr. Mills finds a difference in elite culture today. He contrasts the reading of Washington and Adams with that of present-day high officials—to the disadvantage of the latter.

Between the time of the founding fathers and the present, new wealth has crashed the inner circle with increasing tempo, especially with the advent of suddenly-great fortunes after the Civil War. Old wealth has nevertheless, the author says, kept the edge in quiet power. In probably his best chapter, "Local Society," he shows the class structure of an American community today, with particular attention to the relationships between old and new wealth.

But Dr. Mills' historical evaluation is incomplete. It is not enough to show American society as always having main-

tained an elite because that, without something else added, appears inconsistent with our democratic principles. We must go back of American history to understand American history. Every society in the five thousand years of the recorded story of man has had an elite. The new United States could hardly reverse an age-old tendency, though class structure in the new world became more flexible. Filling out the perspective thus would have taken no more space than incomplete side-glances at Greece and vague references to feudalism as a dark, dank past to be shuddered at.

The legions of data in this book march past some other things needful for perspective. What emerges—and this will sound paradoxical—is an oversimplified picture of the national structure of power. Successful executives are conditioned, of course, by previous experience, but it would be humanly difficult to lose all adaptability (especially since Dr. Mills' elite learn tricks so readily). And in presenting national leaders as impersonal, he does not grant enough leeway to a sense of responsibility toward those under them and toward the public. Nor is the victory of the Executive over Congress as complete as Dr. Mills makes it.

This book is oversimplified in leaving the inference that human life is entirely shaped by the narrow circle of obvious power. Ideas, political and otherwise, have welled up from "lower" levels. The Populists, the Progressives, the New Dealers, whether damned or praised, have been heard and heeded. The statements in the Declaration of Independence have not been completely circumvented. When constricted, they have still worked as a leaven.

While the character of the Power Elite is oversimplified, the book contains some worthy evidence and some valid conclusions. Anybody with an eye or ear will have to admit some of the author's charges. Dr. Mills' attempt to marshal us along his path will not prevent the reader's tearing off pieces which are affirmed or denied by his own experience. With respect to language alone, there will be many a cussing or chuckling pause over such provocative phrases as "war lords," "myth" and "crack-pot realism."

This is an intemperate book, but it must be judged temperately. One of the oldest American traditions is that of dissent. It would have to be. Our nation was born from it, and so full and clear has been that line ever since that

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it has come to be known as "protest literature."

But also within our heritage is the time of calm appraisal. Our excesses of mood or statement have usually yielded to the corrective of common sense. Common sense may be ever so uncommon, especially when we try to locate it exactly. But it displays itself too often to be a myth.

The Free Man's Library, A Descriptive and Critical Bibliography, by Henry Hazlitt, D. Van Nostrand, Princeton, N. J., 1956. \$3.50.

Reviewed by
LEBARON R. FOSTER
Vice President

Public Opinion Research Corporation

Imagine, if you please, not a five-foot bookshelf but one extending 37 feet around your office walls. Reposing on that shelf are 550 books, the best in the English language exploring the roots of individual freedom in our society and the foundations of the free economy.

Henry Hazlitt attempts just that in his "Free Man's Library" with what strikes me as notable success. Here, in one small volume, is an illuminated road map of the literature on the freedom side of the great on-going debate.

Simply as a bibliography, the listings serve a valuable finder function. The works are arranged alphabetically by authors, from Lord Acton's *Essays on Freedom and Power* ("All power tends to corrupt, and absolute power corrupts absolutely.") to Zarniatin's novel, *We*. But also, for illumination, Hazlitt supplies for each title a brief qualitative comment—all too brief for the scholar but of real help to the layman who must pick and choose.

An impressive list it is. Adam Smith and Ricardo and Say for the searcher into economic ideas. Burke and Hume and Locke for the most brilliant thoughts on sources of liberty. But also copious listings of modern writers, not neglecting the scare thrillers: Huxley's *Brave New World*, Orwell's *1984*, Oksana Kasenkina's *Leap to Freedom* from the windows of the Soviet Consulate in New York.

Increasingly the corporation is called upon to interpret itself—not only its economic reason for existence, but also its social and moral worth to society. For the speech-making company president, the public relations officer, the employee publication editor, these volumes offer a storehouse of ideas, historical examples and quotes. The material

is there, for those with the energy to extract it.

But at the same time the very vastness of the intellectual stockpile poses a problem. Truthfully, how many of us will give over our evenings and week ends to the task of digesting the "ten best books" among the "classics"? Or even the writings of Hayek and Von Mises that Hazlitt lists among the "ten best" of contemporary works?

This is not a criticism of *The Free Man's Library*. Indeed, no American has worked harder than Hazlitt, in his articles and magazine column, at interpreting present-day problems in the light of sound economic principles and free institutions. (And, parenthetically, few industrial editors outshine him in registering ideas, when he writes for the employee audience.)

Still, a tremendous job remains to be done. A special genius of American management is its capacity to sift the theoretical work in the physical sciences and then apply the best ideas in the technology of materials, machines and processes.

But when we turn to political and social science—the most baffling and frustrating area of management concerns—we find a dearth of systematic inquiry and very little material in useable form. Where can a company's training director go, in search of some way to give the rising young management corps a grounding in the system's fundamentals? Where is the source book for the busy industrial editor, eager to write of serious matters but short of basic materials and not too happy in his grasp of his subject?

Hazlitt's bibliography affords a fine beginning. It shows us, in eye-opening fashion, the wealth of source material at hand. Now, the public relations practitioner will likely ask, how can we digest and extract and organize this so that we can harness it in our daily business of projecting ideas?

Tremors North Of the Border

Continued from Page 21

this kind of thinking originated? Was this false economy, lack of local responsibility, or just plain kow-towing?

A Canadian company recommends a stock deal to its shareholders offering them a proposition to sell out to a U. S. concern at the height of the Trans-

Canada-U. S. ownership squabble. By comparison, the Bell Telephone Company of Canada shrewdly announced a new stock issue would only be sold in Canada to present shareholders, and others resident in Canada.

Underlying all sound public relations perspective in Canada today is the U. S. ownership factor—and its local implications. The Canadian public and the Canadian investor have no quarrel with enterprising U. S. corporations who seek to extend their operations in Canada—past, present or future. They dislike, however, the implication that they are seldom, if at all, invited to invest in the Canadian enterprise except through purchases of parent company stock on U. S. exchanges.

Canadians prefer, with some justification, the privilege of investing in the Canadian operations of the parent company, and being identified as stock-

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What's the Good Word?

Continued from Page 13

business, educational, or trade organization. We need look only as far as our own customer, employee and community relations.

Every company's files are full of specimens of unfortunately phrased letters or ineptly worded policies which have cost the firm seriously in good will and sales volume.

Take for instance the case of a company I know which adopted a policy prohibiting employees from accepting Christmas gifts or other gratuities from suppliers. Departments most affected were directed to write their suppliers in advance about the policy to avoid possible embarrassment. The well-intentioned traffic manager wrote as follows:

"Dear

Please be informed that gifts from suppliers will not be accepted by employees of this Company in the future, due to the danger of developing unbusinesslike favoritism for certain suppliers because of lavish gifts made to the buyers. Your cooperation in not sending any gifts will be appreciated."

Aside from being abrupt almost to the point of rudeness, the letter certainly created an awkward impression on companies who intended to send gifts. It impugned their ethics and slandered them for their gifts in previous years.

The letter was rephrased the next year with the help of the public relations director to read as follows. There is no telling how much good will among shipping companies was salvaged by the new letter:

"Dear

It won't be long until we're in the Christmas season again and many firms will be preparing gifts for their friends in other companies.

Since we here at the Company are honored to think that some of our suppliers may be making such plans for some of us, we are sending you this letter in advance to remind you of our Company policy which prohibits all employees from accepting gifts from individuals or firms with whom we have business contact. We hope our early notification will save you unnecessary trouble and expense.

We appreciate the spirit which inspires such generosity and thank you warmly for your kind thoughts. However, we feel our policy is best for all concerned and is the surest way of avoiding any possible embarrassment to our friends and ourselves. We here at sincerely believe there is no gift quite so priceless as the friendship and respect of those with whom we do business.

Thank you, as always, for your kind cooperation in helping us make our policy effective. We look forward with pleasure to the continuance of our friendly relationship in the coming year."

An example of poor semantics planning in the field of community-employee relations took place not long ago in a medium-sized midwestern city. Plagued by a series of plant shut-downs, layoffs and strikes, the economy of the community was at a low ebb.

At the peak of the strife one of the leading industries in town, which was not directly involved in any of the other trouble, suddenly announced that it was laying off 3,000 employees. The reason given to employees was "because local shipping facilities are tied up by the strike." Everyone assumed this meant that finished inventories had piled up and thus prompted the Company to cease production.

The undercurrent of both public and employee reaction was extremely negative. Most people seemed to feel that at this time, above all others, the company should have tried to stick things out—for the benefit of the community.

It took a great deal of later explanation to overcome this negative impression and put across the idea that *raw materials* were running low. Actually, the company was straining every resource by keeping on 700 employees to perform what were "made jobs"—maintenance work, overhaul jobs, and other necessary but not urgent work. The 3,000 who were laid off were beyond the limits of the firm to carry on a non-productive payroll.

Rather than being callous in the face of the community's adversity, the company actually had been most human and sympathetic in its actions. They merely had not used the proper words in explaining the actions.

Of course, at no point in this discussion of semantics is it intended or implied that pretty words can cover up dirty linen. Certainly there is no greater truth than "good public relations begin with good deeds." *Continued on Page 28*

Tremors North Of the Border

Continued from Page 25

holders in the Canadian enterprise. This may have emotional as well as economic connotations. It is sufficient to suggest that Canadians like to feel they can share in the ownership of their industries within the limit of their resources, and under Canadian jurisdiction.

Good public relations—and a better perspective on U. S.-Canadian relations—can be the answer to some of the trial and error which, unfortunately, has accompanied U. S. investment in Canada. Recent capital expansion and investment programs have been accompanied by some ill-timed, remote, and hasty decisions during the current Canadian economic boom.

Canadians who are concerned with evaluating the amount and extent of U. S. investment in Canada have been equally offended by recent legislative efforts to deny Canadian capital access to the U. S. When dominance abroad is accompanied by restrictions at home, it becomes a serious threat to otherwise amicable relations.

The most obvious advice to those engaged in directing public relations effort in Canada from the U. S. would be to *tailor the effort to local conditions.*

- (1) Never transplant your entire U. S. program. Adapt it for Canadian use—and with somewhat less speed than it might be put into effect at home.
- (2) Never try to impress Canadians with too much glamour, speed, or an overdose of Madison Avenue efficiency.
- (3) Be wary of staging a big, one-night stand, and then neglecting your Canadian public relations effort until the next big event rolls around. Canadians can be sensitive to long lapses in public relations effort of a transparent kind.
- (4) Take advice from your Canadian management team, even when they do not appear to have the same professional appreciation or proximity to the task in hand. Check your decisions against their opinions—and then cross-check their advice against your experience and your observations.

(5) Cultivate the local big-wigs. Be sincere, friendly, and frank about your public relations plans. Don't overlook anyone; even the clergy in Canada are a part of the local scene.

(6) Hire good Canadian talent and



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(7) Don't export U. S. public relations experts to top-salary posts in Canada in a daisy chain of personnel devel-

opment projects. Try importing the Canadian talent to the U. S., if necessary, and then re-export the Canadian talent, with U. S. experience, to the Canadian operation.



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What's the Good Word?

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But there is equal truth in the axiom that even the best of deeds can be misinterpreted if they are not presented in the proper light.

The specific things which we as PR men and women can do to safeguard against such misinterpretations of our firm's deeds are:

1. See that statements and policies which we personally control are properly phrased.
2. Educate top management to the dangers of poor public relations semantics in statements of corporate policy.
3. Encourage top management to use our departments as screening units through which all major statements and policies should be passed for public relations clearance. This does not mean imposing a PR man on the prerogatives of the operating executive who has primary responsibility in the area covered by the particular statement or policy. It merely recognizes that the PR department has a special *communications* talent which can and should be applied as a complement to the basic knowledge incorporated in the policy by the operating executive.
4. With top management's concurrence, carry on an educational program among operating and staff personnel to increase their awareness of the importance of semantics, increasing their own alertness to the possible pitfalls.

Perhaps the best summary of the whole public relations-semantics question is that there are two elements in every major corporate action: the primary and the secondary.

The primary element concerns itself with the accomplishment of the desired objective (announcing a layoff to employees, averting unwanted Christmas gifts, etc.).

The secondary element concerns itself with the public impact of the action—"is it stated in a way which will build or harm public esteem for the Company?"

It is our responsibility as PR men to see that our companies never think of the one element without simultaneously thinking of the other.

Railroad Bibliography

A "Bibliography of Public Relations of the Railroad Industry in the United States," documenting efforts to interest the public in "a new mode of transportation" from 1808 to the present, has been published by the Association of American Railroads.

Compiled by Helen R. Richardson, Reference Librarian of the Bureau of Railway Economics, A.A.R., the bibliography is a pioneering effort to catalogue PR source material for an industry. No other such work has been published.

The 146-page list of references is broken down into three sections. Part one deals with the introduction of railroads to the public from 1808 to 1869. Part two is concerned with railroads and public relations, 1870-1955, and part three outlines the railway employee magazines being received by the library of the Bureau of Railway Economics, and selected publications of the association's Department of Public Relations.

The bibliography was devised to fill a need voiced by PR men in the industry and by reference librarians throughout the country. In her nine-month research effort, Miss Richardson checked the records of 15 libraries, including those of four universities and the Library of Congress, as well as the collection held by the association in the largest and most complete transportation library in the world.

The work was mailed initially to public libraries throughout the country and to PR practitioners in the railroad industry. A limited supply remains, however, and those having a need for the publication may obtain a copy from the Public Relations Department, Association of American Railroads, Washington 6, D. C.

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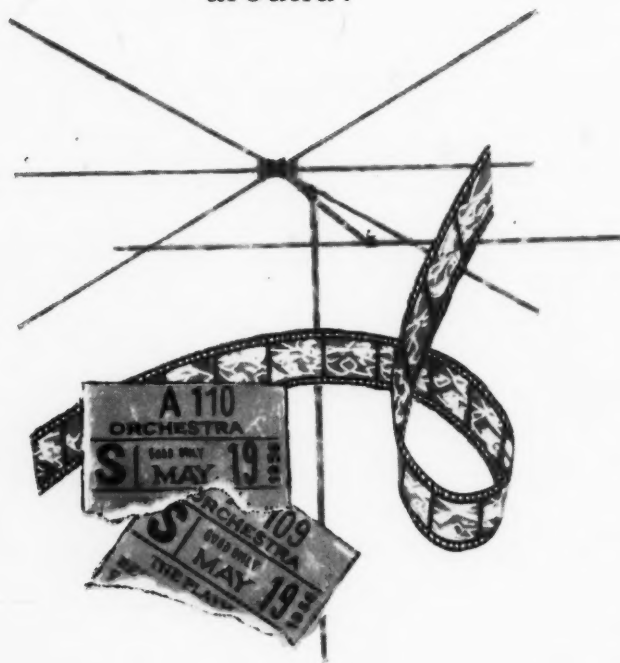
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